The last years of the century produced, together with numerous writers of less ability, two at least whose role in English letters was far from negligible. Isaac D'Israeli would probably be better remembered to-day were his reputation not overshadowed by that of his son. His novels are, indeed, as dead as most novels of that period; his *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles I* have outlived their usefulness. But, on the other hand, his series of literary anecdotes (beginning with *Curiosities of Literature,* published in modest anonymity in 1791, and ending with *Amenities of Literature,* completed when he was old and blind, in 1840) still retain their interest and were favourite works with more than one generation.

But his literary ability was far excelled by his son's. If Benjamin Disraeli had not attained an abiding place in English history by his qualities as a statesman, it would be better realised that he was the most scintillating political novelist that England, and perhaps the world, has ever known.

Just after Isaac D'Israeli began the publication of his gravely mature works, an infant prodigy named Francis Cohen, son of Meyer Cohen, of Kentish Town, aged eight years, translated Homer's *Battle of the Frogs* from the Latin into French. The resultant work was published in 1797 by his proud father, Meyer Cohen, a stockbroker. Later, Francis Cohen changed his faith and adopted his wife's name, Palgrave, under which he became famous. He was Deputy Keeper of the Public Records,

1838-61;
wrote, among other works, *The Eise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*—the earliest important study of English constitutional history based upon the records—
and *The History of Normandy and England;* drew up
the scheme for the work of the Historical Manuscripts
Commission, for which he edited many volumes: and may
be regarded as perhaps the first English scientific historian.